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Brisbane Marina Political Analysis

## Environmental Science Associates

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal to develop 300 new dwelling units in the Brisbane Marina to be located on Sierra Point would introduce 784 new residents into the City of Brisbane. The unit types which would be included in the development would attract many adults without children and it is anticipated that a high proportion of the residents would be registered to vote. The existing Brisbane population is about 3225 of which 1090 are registered voters. The population of the City is expected to reach 3600 by 1980 when the Marina residences would be completed.

Concern has been expressed by some Brisbane residents that the existing City residents would lose political control of their City government with the introduction of the Marina residents. The City of Brisbane can be described as a coherent geographic entity as all of the residents use the same access routes to the City as well as share in the use of community facilities. In addition, there is a homogeneity to the social character of the Brisbane population which is quite different from the character of the population throughout San Mateo County as a whole. Brisbane can be described as a working class community with the attendant education and income level. The City is also characterized by lower property values and a relative stability of residents.

The Marina community would attract a different type of person than those existing Brisbane residents. It is likely that the new residents would tend to be professionals with higher incomes and educational levels. As the Marina development would be physically separate from the existing City, the residents would not share all of the same concerns regarding community facilities and would feel less of an association with the City as a whole. These projected differences could result in political conflict in the City.

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## REPORT METHODOLOGY

This report seeks to answer two questions:

1. "To what extent would it be likely or possible for the new residents of the Marina project to gain political control or influence over the City of Brisbane?
2. "If the Marina residents, acting as a cohesive minority, were able to gain substantial political control, what would be the motivating issues and what might occur?"

Investigation of the first question involved an analysis of the voting mechanics, using the relative numbers of existing and projected voters, within the Marina and within the City as a whole; as well as the history of voter turnout, a comparison with some Countywide voting statistics, and the findings of an article on community conflict.\* A literature search was carried out seeking information on similar situations; i.e., the behavior of a new community developed within a municipality. No published results of such current investigations were found. The literature demonstrated more concern centered around urban and suburban development outside of municipal boundaries, under County jurisdiction. Telephone research of similar municipal situations at Emeryville's Watergate Apartments and Redwood City's Redwood Shores produced information providing an opportunity for comparison.

The answer to the second question was found in the comparative situations and in conversations with people involved with the City of Brisbane: Clark Smithson, City Manager; Anja Miller, ex-Mayor; Al Duro, citizen of Brisbane; and Steve Siskind, EPI.

\*Black, Gordon S., 1974, "Conflict in the Community: A Theory of the Effects of Community Size", *American Political Science Review*, University of Rochester, N.Y.

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## II. CASE STUDIES

### EMERYVILLE\*

A large apartment community (the Watergate Apartments) was developed on the bayside in the City of Emeryville in 1971-1973. Similar to the proposed project in Brisbane, the new community is separated from the old City by a freeway and the new residents are different from the original City residents with more professional occupations, higher incomes and higher educational levels. Unlike Brisbane, the new community comprises almost 50 percent of the 2000 registered voters in the City.

The Watergate community is very active in the City's politics, despite the generally transient nature of apartment dwellers. The residents are interested in being represented in City government. They started registering to vote in 1972 but 1974 was the first election in which the new community could play a major part. In the 1974 general City Council election, one Watergate resident was elected to a Council position. After that, two City Council members from the older part of town were recalled and the recall election in September, 1975 placed two more Watergate residents on the council of five persons.

In this case, the community of new and different people actually took over the majority of Council seats in a very short period of time. This is due in part to the large size of the community and their organized efforts.

### REDWOOD CITY\*\*

Residents began moving into the houses in the Redwood Shores waterfront community in 1969. This totally residential community, separated from the rest of Redwood City by a freeway, now has 550 single-family dwelling units and a total of 819 registered voters (1974). The number

\*Source of much of the information: Ms. Alice Winger, Emeryville City Clerk.

\*\*Source of much of the information: Ms. J. Hildebrand, City Clerk, Redwood City.

11-11-1964

The first part of the document is a letter from the author to the editor of the journal. The letter is dated 11-11-1964 and is addressed to the editor of the journal. The letter discusses the author's work and the results of the experiments. The author mentions that the experiments were conducted in the laboratory of the author and that the results were very satisfactory. The author also mentions that the experiments were conducted in the laboratory of the author and that the results were very satisfactory.

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of residents represents only about three percent of the total City population. The Redwood Shores community is characterized by more professional occupations, higher educational levels, and higher income than the average resident of Redwood City and the voter turnout is comparatively high - 48 percent compared to the City average of 30 percent in the April 1974 election. The residents of Redwood Shores are very active in the City's politics and are interested in the future of their community. In the 1974 election, two candidates from Redwood Shores contested others for vacant council seats. One candidate from Redwood Shores received 81 percent of the total votes from his community. The new community is now represented by one person on the seven-member City Council and two persons on the appointed seven-member Planning Commission.

The Redwood Shores community has sought representation in the City although there appear to be no signs of active conflict between the old and new communities.

#### OTHER

There are other examples of newly developed communities within cities which operate as a distinct political unit but they are unique social situations which do not apply to the Brisbane situation.

The adult community of Rossmoor is located in the City of Walnut Creek. Its residents comprise sixteen percent of the total City population. The age of the residents averages 70 and most of the residents live on a fixed income in a community where costs of living are increasing. Because of these factors and because the community is insulated from the City, the voting patterns differ from the City as a whole. The community has a high voter turnout and records show that they more consistently vote against bond issues for community services like schools. The community is not politically organized and has not had a serious impact on election results. School bonds and tax increases have passed despite their opposition.





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### III. FEASIBILITY OF POLITICAL INFLUENCE

In order to determine the impact of the Marina community on political decisions and politics in Brisbane we developed a series of voting scenarios for an election of three vacant City Council seats in 1980, using the Brisbane population of 3531 and the Sierra Point population of 784. The assumed scenarios and the results are described below.

The scenarios which were developed attempt to describe "worst case" polarized situations but we have avoided prediction of a single situation. Some insight into potential voter behavior was derived from the article by Gordon S. Black on "Conflict in the Community: a Theory of the effects of Community Size". In his survey of the 89 cities of the San Francisco Bay Area, he studied municipal voting characteristics, comparing them on the basis of community size and social and political diversity. It was determined that the larger the City, the more likely it is that it will contain diverse social elements and the more frequent the political conflict. Citizens of smaller cities are more likely to be directly involved in community affairs and conflicts tend to be more intense. Small cities which have social diversity and fragmented political interests tend to have active political participation, many candidates running for offices, high voter turnout and frequent election of non-incumbent candidates. Brisbane in 1980, with the addition of the Marina residents, probably could be classified as a small city with great social and political diversity with the attendant characteristic of active political participation.

#### VOTING SCENARIOS\*

We analyzed nine alternative scenarios of a 1980 city council election as a function of two variables: relative proportion of voter turnout between Brisbane (the older community) and the new Marina development and the degree to which Brisbane voters polarize. In all situations we assumed that voters from the Marina would polarize completely by voting exclusively for their candidates (which would not exceed the number of vacant Council seats in the election). Our analysis deals with a range of situations under which Brisbane candidates would lose. Table 1 shows a matrix of three situations analyzed under each of the variables. The numbers show that Marina candidates would win if Brisbane's vote is diluted by equal division between many candidates while the Marina voters support their candidates 100%. In the worst expected condition, Brisbane would have





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to run 8 candidates with no front-runners in order to lose all three seats. The "worst case" situation occurs when the Brisbane voter turnout is half of that from the Marina; and when half of the Brisbane voters distribute their votes equally among all candidates and half equally among Brisbane candidates only. In this situation, if four candidates from Brisbane were put on the ballot in a three-vacancy election, Brisbane's vote would be diluted and the Marina candidates would win the election.

The analysis was made based upon the simple equal distribution of votes. If the range of votes varied among candidates (as they naturally would), front-runners would emerge and results would be different. The results of the described scenarios merely show the relative power of the voters in the two communities.

\*Assumptions:

- 1) Brisbane population projections from EPI (letter of December, 1975).
- 2) Marina population projection -- 784 persons in 1980.
- 3) Number of registered voters in Brisbane -- 1090 in 1955, 1192 in 1980 (based upon proportionate increase in population).
- 4) Number of registered voters in Marina -- 283 in 1980 (based upon estimated ratio of registered voters in Brisbane to non-school age (K-12) population in Brisbane [1980]).



TABLE 1

MINIMUM NUMBER OF BRISBANE CANDIDATES REQUIRED FOR THE VICTORY OF MARINA CANDIDATES+ IN AN ELECTION FOR THREE COUNCIL SEATS

	Brisbane voter turnout equal to Marina turn- out	Brisbane voter turnout equal to 3/4 of Marina turnout	Brisbane voter turnout equal to 1/2 of Mar- ina turnout
Distribution of Brisbane vote: 1/2 equally among Brisbane candidates only; 1/2 equally among all candidates	7	5	4
Distribution of Brisbane vote: 3/4 equally among Bris- bane candidates only; 1/4 equally among all candidates	10	8	5
Distribution of Brisbane vote: 100% equally among Brisbane candidates only	13	10	7

+ assuming all Marina voters vote exclusively for the Marina candidates

Note: Assume that three Council seats were vacant in the 1980 election. If the percentage of Brisbane voter turnout were 3/4 of the percentage of Marina turnout; if 3/4 of Brisbane voters voted equally for their candidates and 1/4 of Brisbane voters voted equally among all candidates, there would be 8 candidates from Brisbane required to dilute the vote to ensure victory for Marina candidates. If there were 7 candidates from Brisbane, the Marina candidates would win.





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#### IV. CITIZEN ATTITUDES AND ISSUES OF POTENTIAL CONFLICT

From knowledge based on conversations with people involved in Brisbane and from the comparative municipal situations, the issues which could divide the new community from the residents of old Brisbane can be projected.

The loss of political control is a major fear as it is anticipated that the Marina residents would have different interests. The existing residents have placed a high priority on capital improvements in the older residential part of town. It is likely that Marina residents would have a selfish interest in their own neighborhood and would contest the application of capital improvement funds to such uses. In general, the use of City funds for services and improvements could be a dividing issue due to special interests of the two parts of the divided City.

Another potential issue of conflict is recreation--its location, quantity and quality. The planned park in the Sierra Point development would not be used to any great extent by existing Brisbane residents due to access problems and City funds required for its purchase and/or maintenance could be a controversial issue.

Other issues which might be subjects of controversy are: the annexation and use of the South San Francisco portion of the site, the further development of the Southern Pacific land, the development of Fisherman's Park, and some aspects of San Bruno Mountain development. There is also concern among existing residents that approval of the residential portion of the Marina development would open the door to increased development in the Marina and/or in the older residential area. This occurrence is unlikely. In the case of Emeryville one of the issues which the new residents in the Watergate Apartment complex support is limitation of future residential development in the Marina area. Further residential development in the older residential area would serve no purpose to the marina residents as it would not affect their environment and it is not likely to be financially advantageous.





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Of these issues of conflict, two seem likely to be the most formidable and could result in polarization of the City: City funding for services and capital improvements, and recreational open space. The conflict over issues of where recreation should be located, how much should be spent on it, and who should pay for it could be an issue if the park in the Marina were not developed along with the residential units. If the Marina residences were constructed prior to development of the Sierra Point parkland, the new residents could voice objections to the plans for the park or possibly demand immediate development at the City's expense.

The management of services and capital improvements could be handled by the creation of a general improvement district similar to that set up by Redwood City for the Redwood Shores development. The legal and financial arrangements would ensure that future development would be publicly controlled with the City Council in charge, that the initial landowner would have a strong voice in financial decisions, that the early residents would be safeguarded and the landowner would have some control over possible adverse actions by residents during early phases of growth.

The authorization of district general obligation bonds and the ability to levy property taxes on special areas within the City would establish a balance of power, and would insulate the City from possible financial failure and taxation for funding of the new community. The maintenance of sewers, water lines, the dike and streets would be paid for by taxing the general improvement district--the landowners of the Marina. Such an arrangement would reduce the possibility of conflicts over expenditure of City funds on these community services.



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V. SUMMARY

This report provides a range of "worst case" situations from which to choose a possible political future. The conclusion of this report is that it would be possible for the Marina voters to place one, two or three candidates representing their community on the City Council in an election involving three vacant seats. This conclusion is based upon an assumption that the Marina community would be politically motivated and highly organized having a higher voter turnout and more polarized interests than the older portion of the City of Brisbane.

The "worst case analysis" makes several assumptions which would not occur in a real political situation. Taking into consideration the political nature of Brisbane, the potential issues of controversy, and the projected character of the Marina, we will try to describe a reasonable scenario.

In this scenario, we assume a higher degree of organization in the Marina and some political organization in the City. We used an 85% turnout for the Marina, a 65% turnout for Brisbane. The three Marina candidates each receive 85% of the Marina votes and a 3:2:1 division of 15% of Brisbane votes. The eight Brisbane candidates receive 85% of the Brisbane vote and 15% of the Marina vote, broken down with three major front-runners; the candidates receiving respectively: 20.5%, 13%, 10.1%, 6.7%, 6.7%, 3.4%, 3.4%, and 3.4% of the vote. The election would result in two victories for Brisbane and one for the Marina.

Our research shows that there would be issues over which the City and the Marina would be divided. In the case of a significant conflict and polarization of the community, it is likely that the important elections would draw many candidates and that interest would result in a high voter turnout. The Marina community would have the advantages of being a compact community with talents for and interests in political organization. If, however, a substantial opposition were organized by the residents of the older part of the City, they could win the election as their population is substantially greater in number.

The assumption of polarization is part of the "worst case" analysis. Careful organization of the new community as a part of the City could reduce potential polarization, as previously discussed.





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## VI. REPORT PREPARATION

This report was prepared by Environmental Science Associates; Paul E. Zigman, President, under contract to Environmental Planning Institute. Participating ESA staff members included Kathleen Gundry who served as project leader, James Crawford, and James R. McCarthy. Other public agencies and private organizations which contributed information used in the report include:

Mr. Mark Cross, Environmental Planning Institute  
Mr. Al Duro, citizen of Brisbane  
Ms. J. Hildebrand, City Clerk, Redwood City  
Ms. Mary Little, Elections Department, San Mateo County  
Ms. Anja Miller, ex-mayor of Brisbane  
Mr. Stanley Scott, assistant director, Institute of Governmental Studies,  
U.C. Berkeley  
Mr. Charles Shain, Librarian, Environmental Design Library, U.C. Berkeley  
Mr. Steve Siskind, Environmental Planning Institute  
Mr. Clark Smithson, City Manager, City of Brisbane  
Ms. Alice Winger, City Clerk, City of Emeryville

The first part of the paper is devoted to a general discussion of the problem of the origin of life. It is shown that the problem is not only a scientific one, but also a philosophical one. The second part of the paper is devoted to a detailed discussion of the problem of the origin of life. It is shown that the problem is not only a scientific one, but also a philosophical one. The third part of the paper is devoted to a detailed discussion of the problem of the origin of life. It is shown that the problem is not only a scientific one, but also a philosophical one. The fourth part of the paper is devoted to a detailed discussion of the problem of the origin of life. It is shown that the problem is not only a scientific one, but also a philosophical one. The fifth part of the paper is devoted to a detailed discussion of the problem of the origin of life. It is shown that the problem is not only a scientific one, but also a philosophical one. The sixth part of the paper is devoted to a detailed discussion of the problem of the origin of life. It is shown that the problem is not only a scientific one, but also a philosophical one. The seventh part of the paper is devoted to a detailed discussion of the problem of the origin of life. It is shown that the problem is not only a scientific one, but also a philosophical one. The eighth part of the paper is devoted to a detailed discussion of the problem of the origin of life. It is shown that the problem is not only a scientific one, but also a philosophical one. The ninth part of the paper is devoted to a detailed discussion of the problem of the origin of life. It is shown that the problem is not only a scientific one, but also a philosophical one. The tenth part of the paper is devoted to a detailed discussion of the problem of the origin of life. It is shown that the problem is not only a scientific one, but also a philosophical one.

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